

First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and hearts to all,
in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



Third Sunday of Advent

*A Season of Hope, Peace, **Joy**, and Love*

Gaudete!

The Lord's Day
Third Sunday of Advent
*A Season of Hope, Peace, **Joy**, and Love*
Gaudete!
Seven-thirty and Ten O'clock in the Morning

The Worship of God

Gathering Music

The Greeting

The Spirit of the still-speaking God be with you.

And also with you.

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Music for Piano

The Collect (Opening Prayer)

The Concerns of the Church

The Opening Hymn, No. 143

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

The Gathering

Sing aloud to God, our strength and our song!

Rejoice and exult with Joy and gladness!

Worship God with all your heart and mind and soul!

We gather as people of faith, drawing deeply from the wells of salvation!

Recalling our baptism, we seek to be renewed in this sacred setting!

Come to be baptized with the fire of the still speaking Spirit,

For God is restoring us in the midst of beloved faith community!

As the faithful gathered expecting the advent of our God,

We are being empowered as witnesses to the transforming power of the Holy!

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Hymn, No. 128 *One Candle Is Lit* (verse three)

CRADLE SONG

The Litany of *Joy*

We light the candle of *Joy!*

A flame illuminating the great rejoicing in our hearts.

A light to guide our paths, traveling the way of the Holy.

With singing and everlasting Joy, we continue the Advent journey!

Gaudete! Rejoice!

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

ZEPHANIAH 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you[a] in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

The Witness from the Gospels

LUKE 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” 13 He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.” As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Sermon *Don't Worry! Be Happy!*
Music for Meditation

Timothy W. Shirley

The Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The Hymn, No. 154 *While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks* CHRISTMAS

The Carrying Out the Light

The Invitation to the Offering of Gifts

The Benediction

The Closing Song *Let There Be Peace on Earth* WORLD PEACE

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

With every step I take, let this be my joyous creed.

To take each moment and

live each moment in peace, eternally!

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

The Music for Piano

Welcome to Worship at First Congregational UCC

Please continue to mask and practice social distancing in pews, and before and after worship, especially for those who are wearing masks. *Thank you for continuing to respect each other's comfort!*

Offering plates are located near the rear entrance to the sanctuary. Loose change placed in the offering plates is donated to the Melody of Compassion fund.

The lovely chancel flowers are sponsored by Kathy and Mark Holperin in celebration of the Advent Season and Rev. Tim Shirley.

Can you help prepare a dinner for Frederick Place December 17th? Sign up on the board outside the sanctuary. Thanks!

We have received 58 pledges totally \$138,404 for our 2022 goal of \$155,000. Pledge cards are available on the pledge box if you have misplaced yours.

Our December giving, beyond the pledge, has always been dedicated to the Christmas Fund Offering. In earlier years the offering was known as Veterans of the Cross. The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. Eagle River UCC has a long history of contributions to this fund. A reminder: the fund is not included in the 2021 budget and depends upon separate donations. Thank you.

Christmas cards to homebound members/friends and "Snowbirds" are available to sign in the parlor. Take a few minutes and send a greeting before December 15th.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship will be held at 7 PM on Friday, December 24th. There will be no in-person Christmas Day Worship on the 25th. A recording of the Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship will be available by 10 AM on December 25th. A new tradition will be started on the 26th, the first Sunday following Christmas. Instead of a traditional service, Pastor Tim will lead us in the reading of the Christmas story followed by the singing of Christmas carols. This service will not be published online.

A 4 week advent study & prayer group will meet at church **from 6:00 to 7:30** at the church and via Zoom. For more information contact Bill Marshall at bmarsh68@gmail.com.

Print copies of the service will be sent out to members who request them early next week. Please note that for the next few weeks, as we transition to a new pastor coming, print copies of weekly services will be sent out on the Monday after the service instead of the Thursday before. If you would like to receive a print copy of the service by mail each week, and have not been getting one, please contact Nan Pophal at [715-802-8501](tel:715-802-8501).

First Congregational United Church of Christ in Eagle River's Advent – Christmas Cantata, "Let Us Have Music for Christmas", has taken a unique approach in its presentation this year. Due to the uncertainty of Covid-19 cases this fall, more restrictive gathering protocols, and in the spirit of keeping singers and audience members safe it will be presented online.

The diverse performances include a virtual choir, a recorded in- person choir, a piano duet, and readings that will take you on a journey of yearning for God's promised one through the joy of the Savior's birth and culminates with our modern-day celebration of Christmas Day.

The music and readings were compiled and directed by Lori Hunter with the skillful technical contributions of Alex Fluegel. Norma Yaeger is the principal accompanist and Linda Brainard joins her at the piano for a delightful piano duet. Dale Bishop joins the choir on flute for A Celtic Advent Carol, and Barb Helmick and Doug Malinsky are the featured narrators.

The Cantata will be released on the church website on the afternoon of Saturday, December 11th. We hope that you can all join us.

If you are unable to attend worship, remember you can experience the service after about noon on Sunday [HERE](#). A pdf of the sermon will also be available on Monday. Print copies of the service will be sent out to members who request them early next week. Please note that for the next few weeks, as we transition to a new pastor coming, print copies of weekly services will be sent out on the Monday after the service instead of the Thursday before. If you would like to receive a print copy of the service by mail each week, and have not been getting one, please contact Nan Pophal at [715-802-8501](tel:715-802-8501).

Scripture readers, ushers, and camcorder operators are always needed, as well as announcement readers. You can sign up by visiting our website! <https://eagleriverucc.org/signups/> Or contact Joy Turpin at: joyfaithchapinturpin@gmail.com or (715) 479-6560.

Building access to the church has been changed as part of our Security Team's upgrades. If you have an old church key, it doesn't work anymore! New key cards are available to be issued, to those needed access. For events, please let Alex know so that he can schedule the doors to be automatically unlocked for you. Please contact Alex to learn more at alex@eagleriverucc.org.

Prayer requests can be sent to the prayer group through Tobi Johannsen ([920-450-1402](tel:920-450-1402)).

Because of "Substantial" Covid infection rates in Vilas County, an uncertainty in variants, and the arrival of Flue Season, masks are strongly recommended in worship, whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated.

- Please sit in pews with at least 3 feet between family groups.
- Please wear a mask when singing
- If you are unable to wear a mask, you are still welcome in worship, but the more who wear them, the safer we will be.
- We have marked rooms in the building with appropriate capacity for use with seating spaced 6 feet apart. If you use the church for a group meeting, please observe these room capacities for everyone's safety.

First Congregational United Church of Christ

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Eagle River, Wisconsin 54521

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Timothy W. Shirley: pastortim@eagleriverucc.org

Website: www.eagleriverucc.org



First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

Musicians: Linda Brainard, 7:30; Lori Hunter, 10:00

Scripture Readers: Joe Turpin, 7:30

Steve Burrill, 10:00